

ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Environment and Regeneration Policy and Performance Board on Wednesday, 18 June 2025 at the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Woolfall (Chair), P. Lloyd Jones (Vice-Chair), V. Hill, Hutchinson, Nelson, L. Nolan, C. Plumpton Walsh and Stockton

Apologies for Absence: Councillor K. Loftus and McDermott

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: K. Butler, T. Gibbs, F. Harris, I. Jones, A. Plant, N. Renison and R. Taylor

Also in attendance: None

ITEM DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

Action

EUR1 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 February 2025, having been circulated, were signed as a correct record.

EUR2 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.

EUR3 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

The Board considered the Minutes of the meetings of the Executive Board relevant to the Environment and Regeneration Policy and Performance Board.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes be received.

EUR4 ANNUAL REPORT FOR 24/25

The Board considered a copy of the Annual Report from the Chair of the Board for 2024/25. The Board had met four times during the year and the report set out the work carried out during the Municipal Year April 2024 to March

2025.

RESOLVED: That the Annual Report be endorsed.

EUR5 AUTHORITY MONITORING REPORT'S – HOUSING & EMPLOYMENT

The Board received the draft Authority Monitoring Reports (AMR) from the Executive Director - Environment and Regeneration, which provided a progress update on the Halton Delivery and Allocations Local Plan (DALP) policies for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. It also contained the Housing AMR and the Economy AMR.

Local planning authorities were required to publish information, at least annually, that showed progress with local plan preparation. They also needed to report any activity relating to the duty to co-operate, provide any information which may have been collected relating to indicators in the plan and highlight any policies which had not been implemented.

Table 7 in the report provided information on affordable dwellings, however, no data had been captured for affordable units secured via Section 106; this information would be available next year.

A Board Member requested some information on whether there had been an overall carbon reduction and it was agreed that this would be provided in due course.

RESOLVED: That the Board endorse the draft AMR's so that the documents can be made publicly available and published on the Council's website.

Executive Director
Environment &
Regeneration

EUR6 AUTHORITY MONITORING REPORT

The Board considered a report on The Local Plan for Halton, which included the adopted Delivery and Allocations Local Plan (2022) and the Joint Waste Plan (2013). The statutory Local Development Plan is the set of Local Plans (also known as Development Plan Documents (DPDs) that together form the statutory basis for determining whether or not planning permission should be granted.

The Board received the Delivery and Allocations Local Plan (DALP) Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

The Board received the Draft Authority Monitoring

Reports (AMR) from the Executive Director - Environment and Regeneration, which provided a progress update on the Halton Delivery and Allocations Local Plan (DALP) policies for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

Local planning authorities were required to publish information, at least annually, that showed progress with local plan preparation. They were also required to report any activity relating to the duty to co-operate, provide any information which may have been collected relating to indicators in the plan and highlight any policies which had not been implemented.

RESOLVED: That the Board endorse the draft AMR's so that the documents can be made publicly available and published on the Council's website.

EUR7 PRODUCTION OF A BOROUGH WIDE HOUSING STRATEGY – PROGRESS UPDATE

The Board received a report from the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, which provided a progress update on the new Housing Strategy for the Borough.

Following the approval for production of a new Housing Strategy at the Council's Executive Board in April 2024, Board members were advised that Arc4, a housing research policy specialist, had been commissioned to support the production process of the Strategy. This had commenced in September 2024 and consisted of two stages, the first being a Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) which included undertaking a household survey of residents in Halton.

The survey took place between November and December 2024 and was sent to 16,530 households. 1,620 useable responses were received (9.8% response rate). It covered 4 broad themes:

- Your home, neighbourhood and household;
- Housing history;
- Future housing requirements: whole household; and
- Future housing requirements: newly forming households.

The main purpose of the survey was to provide evidence to help assess housing need by type, size and tenure within different parts of the Borough.

The Housing Strategy was currently in the draft process (Stage 2) and once completed, an informal stakeholder engagement would be undertaken in June/July 2025, followed by a formal 6 week public consultation in July/August 2025; the final revisions and adoption was planned for September/October 2025.

RESOLVED: That the Board:

- 1) note the progress of the new Boroughwide Housing Strategy; and
- 2) promote participation in the Stakeholder and Formal Public Consultation process.

EUR8 TRANSPORT AND ACCESSIBILITY, SOCIAL VALUE IN PLANNING AND HOUSE EXTENSIONS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS

The Board received a report from the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration, which requested approval to support the Supplementary Planning Process for the Transport and Accessibility; Social Value in Planning; and House Extensions Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD).

The Local Plan for Halton currently included the adopted Delivery and Allocations Local Plan (2022) and the Joint Waste Plan (2013). The statutory Local Development Plan was the set of local plans that together formed the statutory basis for determining whether or not planning permission should be granted.

SPD's add further detail to the policies in the Local Plan and they are used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on issues such as social value, transport and accessibility or house extensions.

The report set out the policy links for each SPD and these were noted.

RESOLVED: That the Board support and endorse the development of the above named SPD's through the regulatory planning process, until adoption.

EUR9 LOCAL HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE

The Board received a report from the Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration which provided an

update on local highway maintenance matters.

Members were advised that 25% of Government funding would be contingent on Local Authorities being able to demonstrate that they were committed to improving local highway maintenance.

The Department for Transport (DfT) was seeking to improve its understanding of the condition of the country's roads and in March 2025, requested a data return from all Local Authorities to unlock the uplift in funding. The DfT had created a template containing specific information, which all Authorities were required to publish on their websites by 30th June 2025; this was attached to the report in Appendix A. Once published, and in addition to a further report to be published in October, Halton would be able to secure 25% of funding for the Borough's highway network to be released in January 2026 for expenditure by the end of March 2026, as well as better informing local people of the steps being taken to improve them.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

EUR10 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR QUARTER 4 OF 2024/25

The Board received the Performance Monitoring Report for Quarter 4 of 2024/25.

The key priorities for development of improvement in 2024/25 were agreed by Members and included in Directorate Plans for the various function areas reported to the Board as detailed below:

- Development and Investment Services;
- Highways and Transportation, Logistics and Development Services; and
- Waste and Environmental Improvement and Open Space Services.

The reports detailed progress against service objectives and milestones, and performance targets and provided information relating to key developments and emerging issues that had arisen during the period.

RESOLVED: That quarter 4 performance management reports be received and noted.

EUR11 COUNCIL WIDE SPENDING AS AT 31 JANUARY 2025

The Board received a copy of a report, which was presented to the Council's Executive Board on 13 March 2025. The report outlined the Council's overall revenue and capital spending position as at 31 January 2025, together with the latest 2024/25 outturn forecast. The report also described the reasons for key variances from budget.

The Executive Board had requested that a copy of the report be shared with each Policy and Performance Board for information, to ensure that all Members had a full appreciation of the Councilwide financial position, in addition to their specific areas of responsibility.

RESOLVED: That the Councilwide financial position as at 31 January 2025, as outlined in the report, be noted.

Meeting ended at 7.22 p.m.